UNITED NATIONS

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/2017
7 November 1995

TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- General Assembly hears expression of support from representatives for Olympic Truce during forthcoming Games.
- Security Council and General Assembly to hold concurrent meetings to elect judge in International Court of Justice on 28 February 1996.
- DPI was 'Flagship of Departments' and a model operation and should receive needed resources, representatives tell Administrative and Budgetary Committee.
- Ceasefire in Bosnia and Herzegovina holding well, UNPROFOR says.
- International cooperation in space technology could contribute substantially to economic and social development, Chairman of Committee on Peaceful Uses of Outer Space says.
- Land mines continue to kill and maim long after conflict was over, Disarmament and International Security Committee is told).
- Legal Committee recommends General Assembly amend Charter regarding "enemy State clauses".

* * *

In the General Assembly, wide support was expressed for honouring the "Olympic truce" during the forthcoming Olympic Games, as speakers stressed the importance of sport and the Olympic ideal in building a better world.

The Assembly has been considering a draft on the Olympic Ideal which would call on Member States to reaffirm the observance of an Olympic truce during the 1996 Olympics to be held in the United States.

"We must support the efforts of our national Olympic committees to institute strong anti-doping measures, including unannounced testing," said the representative of Canada and called upon Member States to reinforce their mutual cooperation in international anti-doping efforts.

The representative of Greece said the philosophical nucleus of the ancient Greek spirit in the world athletic movement was being superseded by extreme commercialization that turned fans into hooligans, athletes into ruthless professionals and clubs into trading companies.

The representative of Swaziland said there was a natural link between the ethics of the Olympic Games and the fundamental principles of the United Nations.

Particular attention was drawn to the benefits of promoting sports among the disabled. The representative of Austria said the Special Olympics gave individuals who found themselves marginali-zed and even humiliated by society the chance to be at the centre of attention, to feel large-scale support and to become heroes.

* * *

The Security Council today decided that the election to fill the vacancy in the International Court of Justice, shall take place on 28 February 1996 at a meeting of the Council and at a meeting of the General Assembly at its fiftieth session. The vacancy was created by the death of Judge Andres Aguilar Mawdsley of Venezuela.

In a resolution adopted without a vote, the Council noted with regret, the death of Judge Aguilar Mawdsley on 24 October 1995. It further noted that the vacancy in the International Court of Justice for the remainder of the term of office of the Judge must be filled in accordance with the terms of the Statute of the Court.

Judge Aguilar Mawdsley was appointed to the Court on 6 February 1991. His term of office was to end on 5 February 2000.

* * *

The Department of Public Information was the 'Flagship of Departments' and a model operation, the Fifth Committee (Administrative and Budgetary) was told yesterday. Representatives told the Committee that the Department should be provided the resources needed to perform its crucial function of enlightening the world about the United Nations.

Most delegates said that the work of the Department was useful as a development tool and the General Assembly should review and increase DPI's resources. The spirit shown in seeking more funds for the budget's human rights section should be extended to DPI since its activities could be regarded as United Nations priorities.

"Public information work was just as important as the work carried out by tanks in peace-keeping operations," said the representative of China. Many of the representatives from developing countries said the Department should do more on issues of concern to developing countries, such as poverty, the environment, drought and others because those countries had no means of sharing their problems with the others.

(more)

The representative of Spain, speaking on behalf of the European Union, said although there were exceptions and improvement, much had to be done before the Union could be satisfied that the resources for the DPI were justified. And the representative of the United States suggested cost-effective measures that could be adopted by the DPI "without harming the essential mandates of the United Nations."

* * *

The ceasefire was holding well along the entire confrontation line in Bosnia and Herzegovina, according to an UNPROFOR spokesman in Sarajevo. UNPROFOR was continuing efforts to obtain the speedy and unconditional release of David Rohde, the journalist detained in Bosnian Serb territory.

The situation throughout the UN's area of responsibility is, in general, stable as heavy snow and winter conditions have begun to take hold. Sarajevo was quiet. Access to the city by road and air continued unhindered and the blue routes remained open. But heavy snow on the Mt. Igman logistics road had made what is a hazardous track at the best of times, even more dangerous, according to the spokesman.

The Bosnian Serbs and the Bosnian Croats have carried out an exchange of civilians who have been displaced during fighting around Mrkonjic Grad. The spokesman said about 200 Bosnian Croats were exchanged for 100 Bosnian Serbs.

* * *

International cooperation in space technology could contribute substantially to economic and social development, and could also be a key to the future prosperity of developing countries, said the Chairman of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, Peter Hohenfellner. He told the Fourth Committee (Special Political and Decolonization) what was currently being done was only a modest indication of how space technology could improve people's lives.

The representative of Spain said it was not enough to state time and again that we have moved away from the cold war...we must clearly show the benefits to all derived from the peaceful exploration of outer space.

Developing countries needed remote-sensing data at a reasonable cost and access to affordable telecommunications technology, said the representative of Burkina Faso.

* * *

Long after a conflict was over, land mines "continue to kill and maim, wreaking havoc for years to come," the representative of the United States,

Karl Inderfurth told the First Committee (Disarmament and International Security) as it began considering a draft resolution on disarmament. He said land mines were "weapons of mass destruction in slow motion". He said the United States had spent some $46 million overall for global demining and had pledged an additional $12.5 million. Noting that much remained to be done he urged States to join in co-sponsoring the draft resolution.

* * *

It's been recommended that the General Assembly amend the Charter of the United Nations to eliminate the "enemy State clauses". The Chairman of the Assembly's Legal Committee Nalin Surie of India said that the clauses had become obsolete and that States to which those clauses had been directed were valuable members of the Organization.

The "enemy State clauses" are a series of references in the Charter to any State "which during the Second World War has been an enemy of any signatory of the present Charter".

The Assembly recommended amendment of the Charter at its earliest appropriate future session.

* *** *